# Morrison's *Beloved* and Its Two "Amadas": Postcolonial Signifying upon Translation within African-American Intertextualities

# José Endoença Martins

**Abstract:** This article compares two different Brazilian translated versions of Morrison's novel *Beloved*: the first published in 1994, the other in 2007, both as *Amada*. The analysis concentrates on the speech delivered by Baby Suggs, in which she exhorts her listeners to care for their bodies. The main idea behind this article is that *Beloved* and the *Amadas* converse or talk, thus performing *signifyin(g)*, a concept which, in Henry Louis Gates's words, explains how intertextual conversation happens through "repetition and revision, or repetition with a signal of difference" (xxiv). Its general theoretical foundations include interconnections involving several instantiations of *signifyin(g)*: between Black nationalism and negritude, postcolonialism and African Americanism. In its specific concern with translation, the conversation that the source keeps with the target texts involves two translation theories: fluency and resistance; two kinds of translating interventions: omission and addition; and three types of strategies: syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. These distinct categories help readers grasp translation as a continuum by means of which a specific source text encounters its target equivalents and, then, returns to its origin.

**Key-words:** *Signifyin(g)*, black body, translation, fluency, resistance

**Résumé :** Cet article compare deux différentes traductions brésiliennes du roman *Beloved* de Morrison : la première a été publiée en 1994, l'autre en 2007, les deux comme *Amada*. L'analyse se concentre sur le discours prononcé par Baby Suggs, exhortant ses auditeurs à prendre soin de leur corps. L'idée principale de cet article est que *Beloved* et les deux *Amadas* conversent ou parlent, réalisant ainsi *signifyin(g)*, un concept qui, selon Henry Louis Gates, explique comment la conversation intertextuelle se produit à travers "répétition et révision, ou répétition avec un signe de différence" (xxiv). Ses fondements théoriques généraux incluent les interconnexions impliquant plusieurs exemples de signification : entre nationalisme noir et négritude, postcolonialisme et Africain Américanisme. Dans sa préoccupation spécifique à la traduction, la conversation que la source maintient avec les textes cibles implique deux théories de la traduction: aisance et résistance; deux manières de traduire les interventions: omission et addition; et trois types de stratégies: syntaxique, sémantique et pragmatique. Ces catégories distinctes aident les lecteurs à saisir la traduction comme un *continuum* à travers lequel un texte source spécifique rencontre ses équivalents cibles et, ensuite, retourne à son origine.

Mots-clés: signification, corps noir, traduction, aisance, résistance

**Resumo:** Este artigo compara duas traduções brasileiras do romance *Beloved*, de Toni Morrison. A primeira foi publicada em 1994, a outra, em 2007, as duas como *Amada*. A análise se concentra no sermão que Baby Suggs faz a seus ouvintes, exortando-os a cuidar do próprio corpo. O artigo gira em torno da idéia de que *Beloved* e suas duas *Amadas* conversam e, assim, ativam a *signifyin(g)*, conceito que, de acordo com Henry Louis Gates, explica como o diálogo entre textos involve a "repetição e a revisão ou a repetição com um sinal da diferença" (xxiv). Seu fundamento teórico geral inclue relações envolvendo vários exemplos de significação: entre nationalismo negro e negritude, entre pós-colonialismo e afroamericanismo. No seu interesse específico na tradução, a conversa do romance fonte com os textos alvo envolve duas teorias da tradução: fluência e resistência; duas modalidades de intervenção translatória: omissão e adição; e três tipos de estratégias: sintática, semântica e pragmática. Estas categorias distintas ajudam o leitor a apreender a tradução como um *continuum* por meio do qual um texto fonte específico se encontra com seus textos alvo equivalentes e, em seguida, retorna à sua origem.

Palavras-chave: significação, corpo negro, tradução, fluência, resistência.

**Resumen:** Este artículo compara dos versiones brasileñas diferentes de la novela *Beloved* de Morrison. La primera fue editada en 1994, y la otra en 2007, las dos con el título *Amada*. El análisis se concentra en el discurso pronunciado por Baby Suggs, exhortando a sus oyentes para cuidar de su cuerpo. La idea principal de este artículo es que *Beloved* y las dos *Amada*s conversen o hablen, realizando así *signifyin(g)*, un concepto que, en las palabras de Henry Louis Gates, explica cómo la conversación intertextual pasa a través de "la repetición y la revisión, o la repetición con una señal de diferencia" (xxiv). Entre sus fundamentos teóricos generales son interconexiones que abarcan varios tipos de significación: entre el nacionalismo negro y negritud, postcolonialismo y afroamericanismo. En su preocupación específica con la traducción, la conversación que el texto de partida mantiene con los textos de llegada incluye dos teorías de la traducción: la transparencia y la resistencia; dos tipos de intervenciones traductoras: la omisión y la adición; y tres categorías de estrategias: la sintáctica, la semántica y la pragmática. Estas categorías distintas ayudan a los lectores a entender la traducción como un proceso continuo mediante el cual un texto de partida específico encuentra sus textos de llegada equivalentes y, a continuación, vuelve a su origen.

Palabras clave: significación, cuerpo negro, traducción, transparencia, resistencia.

The study of translations is truly a form of historical scholarship because it forces the scholar to confront the issue of historical difference in the changing reception of a foreign text. Translation, with its double allegiance to the foreign text and the domestic culture, is a reminder that no act of interpretation can be definitive for every cultural constituency, that interpretation is always local and contingent, even when housed in social institutions with the apparent rigidity of the academy. (Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation* 46)

#### Introduction

Despite the implicit reference in the title to Brazilian writer Jorge Amado's novel *Dona Flor e seus dois Maridos* [*Dona Flor and her two husbands*], this article focuses on the four-page sermon (86-89) that Baby Suggs delivers to her Black community in the fictional context created by African American writer Toni Morrison in her 1988 novel *Beloved*. In Brazil, Amado's *Dona Flor* has attained literary and cinematic success while Morrison's *Beloved* has received two translated versions in Portuguese, both as *Amada*: the first by Evelyn Kay Massaro in 1994; the other, in 2007, by José Rubens Siqueira. Wishing to deal with Baby Suggs's sermon from a particular perspective that brings literature, literary theory, and translation together, my study will consist of the following three general parts: first, I will present a brief characterization of the sermon in order to familiarize the reader with Baby Suggs's "holy" figure, words and teaching; second, from the perspective of Henry Louis Gates's concept of *signifyin(g)*, I will build a broad theoretical basis, aiming at placing African American literary production and translation together under the postcolonial theoretical umbrella. Due to its conceptual coverage, I hope that *signifyin(g)* will help readers understand how postcolonial Black source and target texts talk and converse. In the third section, I will show that the translation of Baby Suggs's sermon from English to Portuguese tells us how the two Brazilian *Amadas* signify upon *Beloved*. I will emphasize that Massaro's *Amada* signifies upon *Beloved* through intertextual differences, while Siqueira's converses with the source text by means of textual similarities.

#### 1. Baby Suggs's Sermon: Blackness in Body and Flesh

In Morrison's *Beloved*, the sermon delivered by Baby Suggs to her highly receptive Black audience is part of a collective nationalist stand, marked by the black body that has moved from slavery at Sweet Home to freedom at Bluestone Road. This dislocation reflects the physical, political and racial displacement that is at the heart of Black nationalism, defined by James H. Cone as both the philosophy and praxis through which "nationalist thinkers have rejected the American side of their identity and affirmed the African side" (4). He goes on to say that Black nationalists

have contended that 244 years of slavery, followed by legal segregation, social degradation, political disfranchisement, and economic exploitation means that blacks will never be recognized as human beings in white society. America isn't for blacks; blacks can't be for America. The nationalists argue that blacks don't belong with whites, that whites are killing blacks, generation after generation. Blacks should, therefore, separate from America, either by returning to Africa or by going to some other place where they can create sociopolitical structures that are derived from their own history and culture. (4)

Anchored upon a strong nationalist base (separation, indigenous history and culture), the speech opens with the narrator's emphasis on the preacher's energetic dedication to her race, communal leadership and healing force, as we are told that she "let her great heart beat" (*Beloved* 87) in the presence of the black people who have gathered together in the Clearing to listen to her holy words. Morrison's narrator introduces the leading figure of Baby Suggs with eloquent words:

when warm weather came, Baby Suggs, holy, followed by every black man, woman and child who could make it through, took her great heart to the Clearing – a wide-open place cut deep in the woods nobody knew for what at the end of a path known only to deer and whoever cleared the land in the first place. In the heat of every Saturday afternoon, she sat in the clearing while people waited among the trees. (87)

In the Clearing, before addressing her invigorating and emancipating message to her audience, Baby Suggs asks the children, women and men who have come to listen to her to participate in a collective celebration. She first says to the children, "let your mothers hear you laugh." Then, she tells the men, "let your wives and your children see you dance"; finally, she invites the women to "cry [...], for the living and the dead. Just

cry" (87-88). The narrator sums up this festival of physical mobility and spiritual enchantment:

laughing children, dancing men, crying women and then it got mixed up. Women stopped crying and danced; men sat down and cried; children danced, women laughed, children cried until, exhausted and riven, all and each lay about the Clearing damp and gasping for breath. In the silence that followed, Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great heart. (88)

As the reader can notice, the community, in its bodily and soulful enactment of the dance, is the central element in the Clearing, and in Baby Suggs's "great heart" as well. In this celebration, the black body and flesh acquire a unique and emphasized meaning in her sermon.

In fact, awareness of the black body, as these people are experiencing in the Clearing, has long been a recurrent concern in a number of texts by writers of African descent, literary and critical. Stuart Hall, for instance, emphasizes the historical centrality of the body in the cultures of African origin, exhorting us to "think of how these cultures have used the body as if it were, and often was, the only cultural capital we had." He goes on to claim that "we have worked on ourselves as the canvases of representation" (*Da Diáspora* 342).

In her struggle to turn the black body into a "canvas of representation", Baby Suggs challenges, in plain and clear words, the imbalance that persists between the exslave – she herself being a former slave – and slave-owners, denouncing "those white things [who] have taken all I had or dreamed [...] and broke my heartstrings. There is no bad luck in the world but white folks" (Morrison, *Beloved* 89). I believe this discussion will help the Black Brazilian readership of Morrison's concerns with the black body to look at their own black bodies and find new ways and insights to contribute to transnational awareness of black corporeality and intertextuality.

## 2. Black Signifyin(g) and Postcolonial Significations

Gates's notion of *signifyin(g)* encompasses four modalities of textual conversation, namely, (1) between Black texts, (2) between post-colonialism and African Americanism, (3) between Black philosophical considerations of nationalism and negritude, and finally, (4) between translated Black texts. Firstly, regarding signifying upon Black texts, one may say that Gates has taken his concept of *signifyin(g)* from the African American metaphor of the "Signifying Monkey" and literary production in order to understand how Black texts talk. He defines the term *signifyin(g)* as a trope marked by "repetition and revision, or repetition with a signal difference" (xxiv). He goes on to write that

the black tradition is double-voiced. The trope of the Talking Book, of double-voiced texts that talk to other texts, is the unifying metaphor within this book. Signifyin(g) is the figure of the double-voiced, epitomized by

Esu's depictions in sculpture as possessing two mouths. There are four sorts of double-voiced textual relations that I wish to define. (xxv)

Gates argues that African American literary texts have turned into a talking book that can communicate. They have inherited their talking property from the orisha-god Eshu (Esu), with whom Gates associates the book that talks. Eshu's talking ability comes from a double-voicedness derived from the orisha's two mouths. Gates sees the four types of *signifyin(g)* – tropological revision, the speakerly text, talking texts, rewriting the speakerly – as different instantiations of a textual double-voicedness that provides Black literary tradition with its cultural, linguistic, stylistic and discursive peculiarities. *Signifyin(g)*, Gates insists, "this colorful, often amusing trope occurs in black texts as explicit theme, as implicit rhetorical strategy, and as a principle of literary history" (89). From slavery to today, *signifyin(g)* is understood as the repetition of a trope "with differences, between two or more texts" (XXV). Gates explains that

Black texts Signify upon other black texts in the tradition by engaging in what Ellison has defined as implicit formal critiques of language use, of rhetorical strategy. Literary Signification, then, is similar to parody and pastiche, wherein parody corresponds to what I am calling motivated Signification while pastiche would correspond roughly to unmotivated Signification. By motivation I do not mean to suggest the lack of intention, for parody and pastiche imply intention, ranging from severe critique to acknowledgment and placement within a literary tradition. (xxvii)

Secondly, concerning our second modality of textual conversation, I turn to Lois Tyson in order to establish the kind of *signifyin(g)* that may exist between postcolonial concerns and African American literary sensibilities and peculiarities. Tyson stresses the fact that postcolonial criticism is a body of theories, concepts and assumptions which help us look at the African American literary experience from the point of view of the artistic production of a former colonized group of people. The intersection between the literary production of Black American writers and postcolonial criticism is made explicit in Tyson's words. "Postcolonial and African American Criticism", she writes,

are particularly effective at helping us see connections among all the domains of our experience – the psychological, ideological, social, political, intellectual, and aesthetic – in ways that show us just how inseparable these categories are in our lived experience of ourselves and our world [...]. Postcolonial and African American criticism also share a number of theoretical assumptions and political concerns because both fields focus on the experience and literary production of peoples whose history is characterized by extreme political, social, and psychological oppression. (363)

Conversely, Tyson distinguishes one body of thought from the other, explaining that postcolonial criticism "tends to be rather abstract and general in its analyses" while African American criticism "tends to be more concrete and specific" (363).

Thirdly, migratory moves of Black, colonial and postcolonial subjects have become effective attempts to "create sociopolitical structures that are derived from their own history and culture", as nationalist thinkers advocate. In literature, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* offers an instantiation of nationalism and postcolonialism in the character of Caliban – a prototypical representation of Black nationalism and negritude – who articulates the dismissal of Prospero, the white European who has taken over his island. On two distinct occasions, the overthrow of the European settler is suggested in the resistance of Caliban. On the first occasion, Caliban claims ownership of the island, calling out "the island is mine, by Sycorax my mother/which thou tak'st from me" (18). Then, his claim is made through the curse he casts upon Prospero:

> All the charms Of Sycorax: toads, beetles, bats, light on you! (...) You taught me language, and my profit on't Is, I know how to curse: the red-plague rid you For learning me your language. (18-19)

As a colonized being, Caliban's struggle for autonomy and independence, activated through the desire to repossess Sycorax's island, has been repeatedly reshaped by the works of various black and white thinkers and writers. With greater or lesser violence, aggression or determination, these new Calibans within Black transnational letters have spread their nationalist agenda. And, therefore, they have both signified upon Caliban's emancipating resistance and rebellion against Prospero's power and upon colonizing social and political structures designed by colonialist enforcement in Sycorax's former territory. Roberto Fernández Retamar, for example, signifies upon Caliban's rebellious act by reclaiming Caliban, with passion, saying that "our symbol then is not Ariel, as Rodó thought, but rather Caliban. [...] I know no other metaphor more expressive of our cultural situation, of our reality. [...] what is our history, what is our culture, if not the history and culture of Caliban?" (14). This signifying continues with Frantz Fanon, who examines the decolonizing agenda of Black nationalism as it is represented by Caliban's guest for self-determination and states that decolonization infuses the black colonized subject with "a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is truly the creation of new men" (2).

This "new humanity" of the Negro that Fanon reiterates is taken up by Albert Memmi as the breakthrough by means of which the colonized asks himself: "how can he emerge from this increasingly explosive circle except by rupture, explosion? The colonial situation, by its own internal inevitability, brings on revolt" (Memmi 128). Hand in hand, both Black humanity and rupture pave a signified trajectory and find in Cornel West a more purposeful formulation, this time not directed against the Western colonizer or the white oppressor, but turned in favor of cultural values of African origin. It is, West contends, "a nostalgic search for the African parent" (85), a search that takes shape in the answer to Du Bois's question, given by the Negro's regained humanity, "what, after all, am I? [...] am I a Negro?" (821). Imbued with this self-determined and independent humanity, the new being fully immerses himself into Black culture, an attitude that Ferreira claims to be characterized by a "period in which the person plunges into Black nationalism" in order to escape white values. Ferreira argues that the Negro's "interest in 'Mother Africa' becomes evident" (81).

But in order to end the assimilation of white values and to start appreciating and living the Black values of negritude is still a reactive attitude, necessary but incomplete for the emergence of a "Black humanity" that invigorates Blackness. Thus understood and lived, that is, in isolation and apart from whiteness, Blackness is denounced by Glissant as something coming from an atavistic culture. "Atavistic cultures", Glissant teaches, "tend to defend [...] often in dramatic ways [...] the concept of identity as having a single origin [...] and to exclude the Other" (27). Exclusive identities, such as the nationalist, which is based on values of African origin, are seen as "purified identities". "Purification", Kevin Robins explains, "aims to secure both protection from, and positional superiority over, the external other" (42). As this is an identity marked by an antagonistic polarity between two worlds or two opposing traditions (that of the exslaves and that of the owners of slaves), Hall believes that the "purified" Negro finds it "tempting to think of identity in the age of globalization as destined to end up in one place or another" (A Identidade Cultural 88), in the West or in Africa. The nationalist Negro opts for Africa. As we have seen from Caliban to today, African American racial mobility contemplates this long historical perspective. Historically, Negro Americans have also gone through migratory displacement as slaves, within the United States, from South to North, during and after slavery was abolished. Diasporic displacement, dislocation or migration of racialized subjects reflect postcolonial experiences in Homi Bhabha's view, as he writes that

> the contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement, whether as a "middle passage" from slavery to servitude, as a "trip out" of the civilizing mission, the accommodation of the massive migration from Third World to the West after World War II, or the movement of economic and political refugees within and outside the Third World. (241)

Finally, with regard to the fourth sort of conversation, *signifyin(g)* has something to say about translated Black texts. Translation of texts by Black novelists plays the role of *signifyin(g)* because it symbolizes conversation between two different and autonomous texts: the *source* and the *target*. In this specific study here, translational conversation goes between *Beloved* and the two Brazilian *Amadas*. In practical terms, the comparison of the source text with its two translated versions will help readers grasp both the theoretical and practical peculiarities of such a translational conversation. Within its African American literary surroundings, another aspect of my article highlights the kind of power connotations that are present when English, a colonialist language, migrates to a colonized language like our Brazilian Portuguese. Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday associate postcolonialism with translation, saying that it is "a broad cultural

approach to the study of power relations between different groups, cultures and peoples, in which language, literature and translation may play a role" (106). The potential role that translation can play has to do with challenging asymmetric "power relations" that still remain between colonialist agendas and colonized subjectivities. Both in Beloved and in the two Amadas, Baby Suggs's sermon denounces the power imbalance, advising her people to "love it [your flesh/body]. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it" (Morrison, Beloved 88). Baby Suggs's language, African American Literature and translated texts certainly become relevant in all this. The inclusion of this specific novel of Morrison's, her entire literary production and the African American literary tradition under the theoretical and practical 'umbrella' of postcolonial thought is sustained by the assumption that both postcolonial and African American people have suffered "the experience of being colonized, the experience of living under colonial rule, and the experience of adjusting to national independence after colonial rule has ended; [...] like colonized populations, these peoples [African Americans] have been deprived of the cultures, languages, and status they enjoyed in their homelands" (Tyson 191). A mere look at the traffic of Africans to the United States, at slavery in Beloved and the two Amadas, and at the Jim Crow system will tell us how the experiences of Black Americans in real life and literature (Baby Suggs's sermon included) challenge asymmetrical power relations, which postcolonial critics, and negritude's thinkers as well, are aware of.

From a postcolonial orientation, translators of Black texts must be aware that they are urged to deal with "the colonialist powers and, more broadly, [with] studies of the effect of the imbalance of power relations between colonized and colonizer" (Munday 133). Pressed by "the imbalance of power relations", colonized subjects – translators, authors and readers – are asked to act, make a move, and break barriers. Mobility is the key word here. It works as the thread that weaves the two central elements of the analysis together, the Black text and the black body. Franco Moretti explains that literary mobility comes from "the inequality of the world literary system: an inequality which does not coincide with economic inequality, true, and allows some mobility – but a mobility internal to the unequal system, not alternative to it" (78). Moretti goes on to claim that "movement from the periphery to the center is less rare, but still quite unusual, while that from the center to the periphery is by far the most frequent" (76). This is the case here because it is translation that makes the US English of *Beloved* move to the Brazilian Portuguese linguistic and cultural *milieu* found in the two *Amadas*.

Etymologically, translational mobility derives from the Latin word "*translatio*". In my analysis, it refers not only to the transfer of meaning – linguistic/cultural – from the source to the target text, but also includes a particular movement involving source authors and target readers, sponsored by a translator. In Brazil, the publication of Morrison's novels in general and of *Beloved* in particular not only enlarges the availability of Black texts among us, but also reinforces Brazilian readership of African American novelists and their novels.

# 3. Fluent and Resistant Translational Mobility: Baby Suggs's Sermon in English and Portuguese

Both Massaro's and Siqueira's translational rewriting of Morrison's work remain distinct linguistic and cultural versions of the source text. Dealing with two distinctive translational entities, the Massaro and Siqueira translations fit into Peter Newmark's double characterization of translators as "targeteers" or "sourcerers" (Landers 51). These are translators who are likely to follow two kinds of translational attitudes: the "targeting" translation, which emphasizes the target text's quest for fluency; the "sourcing" rendition, which focuses on the source text's resistance to be made fluent in the target culture. From Venuti's perspective, these modalities of rendering a text from one language into another would correspond to the dichotomy involving domesticating and foreignizing translation. He explains that "translation, like any language use, is a selection accompanied by exclusions, an intervention into the contending languages that constitute any historical conjuncture, and translators will undertake diverse projects, some that require adherence to the major language, others that require minoritizing subversion" (30).

For Clifford Landers, fluency – or transparency – is seen by some translators as a dream come true while they are translating, a position that mirrors what Schleiermacher defines as one possible path of the translator whereby "the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him" (49), leaving the reader with the feeling that he is reading in his own native language. As Landers puts it,

> most translators judge the success of a translation largely on the degree to which it "doesn't read like a translation." The object is to render Language A into Language B in a way that leaves as little evidence as possible of the process. In this view, a reader might be unaware he/she was reading a translation unless alerted to the fact. [...] Upon beginning a project a translator must decide to what point transparency is a desideratum. (49)

As for resistance, Landers explains that

resistance is the concept that a translation should patently demonstrate that it is a translation [...]. Translators who follow resistance theory deliberately avoid excluding any elements that betray the "otherness" of the text's origin and may even consciously seek them out. Smoothness and transparency are therefore undesirable and even marks of a colonizing mentality. The reduced readability of the final product is an indication of its fidelity to the source language [...]. (52)

This position reflects Schleiermacher's other possible path for the translator, whereby the translator "leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him" (49). The reader is expected to accept the strangeness of the source text.

As fluent or resistant translations, the two distinct versions of Baby Suggs's sermon present in the two *Amadas* are enactments of Black nationalist postures that place blacks and the whites on two opposing sides, insisting on Black nationalism and

proposing separation or rupture between former slaves and slave-owners and 'purified' Blackness, set apart from whiteness. Whether consciously or not, Massaro's and Siqueira's respective decisions in rendering the novel into Brazilian Portuguese have contributed to the creation of a diversified readership – nationalist or otherwise – of Morrison's novel among those Brazilian readers who read translated literature.

Linguistic elements are indicators of these two separate racialized spheres that distinguish one side from the other. While the adverbial phrase "here, in this place" designates the former slaves, "yonder" refers to slave-owners. Additionally, "here" is defined as positive, generally associated with love, while "yonder" is characterized negatively, commonly aligned with a lack of love, and with hate. In the discussion that follows, these opposing marks will be crucial for the understanding of the aspects that allow Massaro's and Siqueira's translations to signify upon Morrison's *Beloved*, and the second version to signify upon the first.

In this first excerpt (Excerpt 1),

"Here", she said, "in this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it." (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

-- Aqui – dizia –, neste lugar, somos carne; carne que chora, que ri; carne que dança descalça sobre o capim. Amem essa carne. Amem muito. Lá fora eles não amam nossa carne. Eles a desprezam. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 106)

"Aqui", dizia ela, "aqui neste lugar, nós somos carne; carne que chora, ri, carne que dança descalça na relva; amem isso. Amem forte. Lá fora não amam a sua carne. Desprezam a sua carne. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

Massaro's and Siqueira's respective positions explain the translational differences between their target texts with regard to their use of specific linguistic features. As for dialogue marks, while Massaro opts for the fluent use of "--", Siqueira brings English quotation marks ("") into Portuguese. In relation to the adverb "here", Massaro decides to omit its second occurrence, but Siqueira keeps it as "aqui". Keeping opposing decisions evident, Massaro inserts a repetition of the pronoun "que" (meaning "that"), but Siqueira opts to omit it, as Morrison has. Fluency and resistance also occur as the two translators transfer the adverb "*in grass*" as "sobre o capim" and "na relva", respectively. Massaro brings the anaphoric "it" into Portuguese as the fluent noun phrase "essa carne", while Siqueira prefers the more resistant option of the demonstrative "*isso*". A similar procedure is taken in relation to the adverb "hard", translated by Massaro as "*muito*" and by Siqueira as "*forte*". When it occurs, Massaro explicitly translates the pronoun "they" as "*eles*", while, following fluency, Siqueira leaves it implicit. Another differentiating option of the translators has to do with how they treat the possessive "your". Fluency leads Massaro to render it as "*nossa*", but

resistance explains Siqueira's option of "*a sua*", repeated in the next sentence, but replaced by the pronoun "*a*" in the sentence that follows in Massaro's translation.

In the following excerpt, their distinct translational procedures still show Massaro and Siqueira in opposition (Excerpt 2):

They don't love your eyes; they'd just as soon pick em out. No more do they love the skin on your back. Yonder they flay it. And O my people they do not love your hands. They only use, tie, bind, chop off and leave empty. Love your hands! Love them. Raise them up and kiss them. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Nem amam nossos olhos; só querem arrancá-los. Muito menos amam a pele em nossas costas. Lá fora eles a açoitam. E, meu povo, eles não amam nossas mãos. Essas eles apenas usam, amarram, prendem, cortam fora e deixam vazias. Amem suas mãos! Levantem suas mãos e beijem-nas! (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 106)

Nem amam seus olhos; são capazes de arrancar fora os seus olhos. Como também não amam a pele de suas costas. Lá eles descem o chicote nela. E, ah, meu povo, eles não amam as suas mãos. Essas que eles só usam, amarram, prendem, cortam fora e deixam vazias. Amem suas mãos! Amem. Levantem e beijem suas mãos. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

The macro-opposition between "here" and "yonder", representing the moral distance between the former slaves as the victims and the slave-owners as the oppressors, mirrors the micro-linguistic differences between the source text vis-à-vis the two target texts. Linguistically, fluency and resistance debate over the possessive "your". In this regard. Massaro exhibits a double allegiance, opting both for resistance by translating the pronoun as "nossos" or "nossas" and for fluency by rendering it as "suas". Sigueira, on the other hand, follows only one pattern, choosing "suas" or "seus". With regard to the pronoun "em"/ "them", Massaro again shows a dual allegiance, favoring both the objective "as" and the possessive "suas". Sigueira remains consistent with his resistant procedure, valuing "suas" as the only choice. However, neither translator takes into consideration the Black English usage "em". As for the verbs, Massaro treats the occurrence of "they'd just" as "só querem", Siqueira, as "são capazes"; "they flay" is treated by Massaro as "acoitam", and by Sigueira as "descem o chicote". Here, strategic inversion indicates that Sigueira privileges fluent translation while Massaro takes a resisting path. Resistance on the part of Sigueira is reflected in the translation of the sentence "love them" as "amem", while Massaro discards this verbal occurrence. A common verbal indication of negation "they do not" receive two different rewriting procedures: with Massaro, it becomes "muito menos", with Sigueira it reads "como também não".

After the eyes and the hand, Baby Suggs addresses her attention towards two other parts of the black body, the face and the mouth (Excerpt 3):

Touch others with them [hands], pat them together, stroke them on your face 'cause they don't love that either. *You* got to love it, *you*! And no, they ain't in love with your mouth. Yonder, out there, they will see it broken and break it again. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Toquem-se uns aos outros com elas, acariciem seu rosto com elas, porque eles também não gostam dele. *Vocês* têm de amar seu rosto, *vocês*! E mais: eles não gostam de nossa boca. Lá fora, irão quebrá-la e quebrá-la de novo. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 106)

Toquem outros com elas, toquem uma na outra, esfreguem o rosto. Esfreguem no rosto, porque eles não amam isso também. Vocês têm de amar, *vocês*. E não, eles não amam a sua boca. Lá, lá fora, eles vão cuidar de quebrar sua boca e quebrar de novo. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

Baby Suggs does not refrain from warning her audience that, in their struggle for physical and psychological survival, there are always two battling sides: the Negroes, who must love their flesh, and those who wish to destroy it. With regard to the black hand and what they may touch, the pronoun "others" is dealt with by Massaro as the reflexive "uns aos outros", while Sigueira makes it lose its reflexivity to simply become "outros", a translational decision that turns Sigueira into a sourcerer and Massaro into a targeteer. As a "targeting" translator Massaro discards the clause "pat them together", while Siqueira's "sourcing" inclination leads him to give this same English sentence the free form of "toquem uma na outra". The next sentence "stroke them on your face" receives from Massaro the resistant language "acariciem seu rosto com elas", but Sigueira applies to it the fluent version "esfrequem no rosto". The sentence "they don't love that either" oscillates between the more fluent option "eles também não gostam dele" and the more resistant decision "eles não amam isso também". The pronoun "it" also varies in its coming to Portuguese, either as "seu rosto" according to Massaro's fluent strategy, or with no explicit equivalent in Sigueira's rewriting. As already mentioned before, the possessive "your" varies between Massaro's fluent treatment as "nossa" and Siqueira's resistant manipulation as "sua". The expression "and no" goes through the same antagonistic dual process: with Massaro, fluency turns it into "e mais"; with Sigueira, resistance leads it to become "e no". In order to account for the redundant expression of place in "yonder, out there", Massaro utilizes the fluent translation "lá fora", while Siqueira uses the resistant option of "lá, lá fora", keeping its redundancy.

Fluent and resistant manipulation of the source text is addressed to the mouth in the next excerpt (Excerpt 4):

What you say out of it they will not heed. What you scream from it they will not hear. What you put into it to nourish your body they will snatch away and give you leavins instead. No, they don't love your mouth. *You* got to love it. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Jamais vão dar atenção às palavras e aos gritos que saem dela. O que colocamos dentro dela para nutrir nosso corpo será arrancado e substituído por restos. Não, eles não gostam de nossa boca. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 106-107)

O que sai de sua eles não vão ouvir. O que vocês gritam com ela eles não ouvem. O que vocês põem nela para nutrir seu corpo eles vão arrancar de vocês e dar no lugar os restos deles. Não eles não amam sua boca. Vocês têm de amar. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

Massaro's translation departs significantly from Morrison's text. In her insistence on fluency, Massaro fuses the two sentences "what you say out of it they will not heed. What you scream from it they will not hear." into just one: "Jamais vão dar atenção às palavras e aos gritos que saem dela." Also, she exchanges the positions of the terms in the sentences, moving the sentence "they will not hear" to the front, and translating it, fluently, as "jamais vão dar atenção". She also replaces the repeated pronoun "what" with the nouns "palavras" and "gritos". In translating these two sentences, Siqueira opposes Massaro's fluency with resistance by keeping very close to Morrison's source text and maintaining them as two sentences. In the following sentence, Massaro addresses fluency in the subject pronoun "you" by translating it as an implicit "nós", and, consistently, transforms the verb "put" into "colocamos". With a fluent strategy, she turns the possessive "your" into "nosso", and transforms the active sentence "they will snatch away and give you leavins" into the passive "será arrancado e substituído por restos". Sigueira's treatment of this part of the excerpt distances itself from Massaro's. His translating interventions resist departing from Morrison's text. The pronoun "you" remains "vocês", "your" is repeated as "seu", and the active sentences remain as such. In the last sentence, remaining consistent with her previous fluent decisions, Massaro makes the verb "love" and the possessive "your" correspond to "gostar" and "nossa", respectively. With regard to this same sentence, Sigueira reaffirms his belief in the translating procedures of resistance by consistently deciding to relate "love" and "amar", "your" and "sua". Finally, consistent with a fluent perspective of translation, Massaro ignores the source sentence "you got to love it", while Sigueira opts for resistant intervention and translates it as "vocês têm de amar".

In the following short excerpt (Excerpt 5),

This is flesh I'm talking about here. Flesh that needs to be loved. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Estou falando de carne. Carne que precisa ser amada. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 107)

É de carne que estou falando aqui. Carne que precisa ser amada. (Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

Massaro and Siqueira apply specific translational strategies to the source text. For instance, while Massaro reduces the sentence "this is flesh I'm talking about here" in order to give it the fluent version "*estou falando de carne*", Siqueira, using resistant translation, renders it "*é de carne que estou falando aqui*".

This excerpt (Excerpt 6)

Feet that need to rest and to dance; backs that need support; shoulders that need arms, strong arms I'm telling you. And O my people, out yonder, hear me, they do not love your neck unnoosed and straight. So love your neck; put a hand on it, grace it, stroke it and hold it up. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Pés que precisam descansar e dançar. Costas que precisam de apoio; ombros que precisam de braços; braços fortes. Meu povo, lá fora eles não amam o nosso pescoço ereto. Vocês é que devem amá-lo. Ponham a mão nele, agradem-no, acariciem-no. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 107)

Pés que precisam descansar e dançar. Costas que precisam de apoio; Ombros que precisam de braços, braços fortes, estou dizendo. E, Ah, meu povo, lá fora, escutem bem, não amam o seu pescoço sem laço, e ereto. Então amem seu pescoço; ponham a mão nele, agradem, alisem e endireitem bem. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

shows that Massaro continues consistently with fluency and decides not to provide any translation to the source phrases "hear me" and "I'm telling you". Siqueira meanwhile remains faithful to resistant intervention by translating these two same phrases as "escutem bem" and "estou dizendo". Later, motivated by fluency, Massaro translates the possessive "your" as "nosso" and discards the adjective "unnoosed". Siqueira, on the other hand, provides an explicit version to this adjective, "sem laço". Massaro resorts to fluent translation as she distances the target "vocês é que devem amá-lo" from the source "so love your neck". For the same source clause, Siqueira takes a resistant attitude and translates it as "então amem seu pescoço". In another of Massaro's interventions, she discards the sentence "hold it up", for which Siqueira offers the sentence "endireitem bem" as its equivalent in Portuguese.

This next passage (Excerpt 7)

And all your inside parts that they'd just as soon slop for hogs, you got to love them. The dark, dark liver – love it, love it [...]. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88)

Esse é o nosso fígado escuro, amem-no. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 107)

E todas as suas partes de dentro que eles são capazes de jogar para os porcos, vocês têm de amar. O fígado escuro, escuro – amem, amem. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

is also marked by Massaro's refusal to provide translation to the sentence "And all your inside parts that they'd just as soon slop for hogs, you got to love them". In addition, she eliminates redundancy from the second sentence "the dark, dark liver – love it, love it", characterized by the repetition of the adjective "dark" and the verb "love". Taking different steps, Siqueira provides a resistant translation to this same source sentence, keeping it similar to the original.

Finally, in this last excerpt (Excerpt 8),

[...] and the beat and beating heart, love that too. More than eyes or feet. More than lungs that have yet to draw free air. More than your life-holding womb and your life-giving private parts, hear me now, love your heart. For this is the prize. (Morrison, *Beloved* 88-89)

E também a pulsação do coração que bate. Mais do que os olhos ou pés. Mais do que os pulmões que ainda têm muito a esperar para respirar o ar da liberdade. Mais do que o ventre que abriga a vida, mais do que as partes íntimas que fazem a vida, devemos amar nosso coração. Porque este é o prêmio. (Morrison, Trans. E. Massaro 107)

E o bater do batente coração, amem também. Mais que olhos e pés. Mais que os pulmões que ainda vão ter de respirar ar livre. Mais que seu útero guardador da vida e suas partes doadoras de vida, me escutem bem, amem seu coração. Porque esse é o prêmio. (Morrison, Trans. J. Siqueira 126)

Massaro's translating intervention transports the word "beat" to Portuguese as "pulsação", transforms the adjective "beating" into the phrase "que bate", but denies translation to the clause "love that too", eliminating it from the target text. With this specific clause Sigueira remains resistant, or faithful to the source. In the sentence where the lungs are mentioned Massaro takes two different procedures: she adds the phrase "tem muito a esperar" in order to cope with the source phrase "lungs that have yet"; additionally, she gives the noun phrase "free air" an ideological interpretation, adjusting its meaning to "o ar da liberdade". In the next sentence, Massaro and Sigueira take different steps and, thus, the noun phrase "life-holding womb" becomes "o ventre que abriga a vida" in Massaro's text, while in Sigueira's, it takes the form of "útero guardador da vida". In addition, the noun phrase "life-giving private parts" arrives in Portuguese through Massaro's translation as "as partes intimas que fazem a vida"; Siqueira makes the noun phrase "suas partes doadoras de vida". Another distinction between these translators presents itself in Massaro's decision to discard the clause "hear me now", which Sigueira translates as "me escutem bem". Finally, the source clause "love your heart" receives distinct treatments: through Massaro, it becomes "devemos amar nosso coração"; in Siqueira, it is "amem seu coração".

## 3.1. Signifyin(g) through Fluency and Resistance

Negritude and Black nationalism converge racially and ideologically, negritude being the by-product of nationalism. Both negritude and Black nationalism are exemplified by Baby Suggs's concerns with the black body and the way it must be loved. It is the preacher's insistence on physical love that allows Beloved and the two Amadas to participate in a process of signifyin(g), as it is understood by Gates. Recapturing the critic's words, signifyin(g) is a trope with a double-voice, by means of which "black texts signify upon other black texts" (xxvii), through "repetition and revision, or repetition with a signal of difference" (xxiv). In this section, signifyin(g) will help us look at the way the source text Beloved and the two target texts Amada - Massaro's and Siqueira's – signify upon each other, thus indicating that translation can be seen as a signifyin(g) process. The idea that a source text repeats itself in the target text, with revision or difference, relates both Massaro's and Sigueira's translations of Morrison's Beloved. As it is claimed here, signifyin(g) is aligned with Mona Baker's concerns about translation, especially the way translators intervene upon source texts and, thus, "strengthen or undermine particular aspects of the narratives they mediate, explicitly or implicitly" (105). Baker goes on to claim that explicit or implicit interventions on the part of translators are carried out by means of a strategy she calls selective appropriation of textual material, which is "realized in patterns of omission and addition designed to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded" (114). These "patterns of omission and addition" can occur in translation, according to Andrew Chesterman, through three different strategies - syntactic, semantic or pragmatic – thus causing alterations to the structure, the meaning or the content of the source text.

Though opposing one another, fluent and resistant conversation involving the *Amadas* brings innovative dimensions – theoretical and practical – to the appreciation of *signifyin(g)* and translation studies. The way Landers explains the two terms, a fluent translation gives the reader a text in which the translator's intervening manipulations of the source text are not easily perceptible. The result of fluency, Landers clarifies, is that the "reader might be unaware he/she was reading a translation unless alerted to the fact (49). Different from fluent translation, which distances the target text from its source, a resistant target text gets closer to its generating text. In terms of what *signifyin(g)* proposes, through resistance translators simply repeat "sourcing" linguistic features in the body of the translated text. Resistant *signifyin(g)* makes Siqueira's *Amada* different from the fluent *Amada* produced by Massaro, but similar as much as possible to *Beloved*. Landers clarifies that resistance in translation rejects fluency, and "deliberately avoid[s] excluding any elements that betray the 'otherness' of the text's origin" (52).

In Massaro's *Amada*, **syntactic** interventions working on Morrison's *Beloved* occur on the structural level of the sentence. Chesterman explains that "syntactic strategies primarily manipulate form" (94) and, as a result, they make the target text look different from its source, that is to say, fluent. Fluency makes *Amada*'s *signifyin(g)* upon *Beloved* visible, initially, in the way Massaro fuses these two source sentences "what you say out of it they will not heed. What you scream from it they will not hear" into only one "*jamais vão dar atenção às palavras e aos gritos que saem dela.*" Fluent *signifyin(g)* repeats itself when Massaro changes the active sentence "they will snatch and give you leavins instead" into the passive "será arrancado e substituído por restos". In resistant signifyin(g), Siqueira differentiates his translation from Massaro's. His **syntactic** interventions show that he signifies upon *Beloved* by keeping a strict equivalence between the source sentences:

what you say out of it they will not heed. What you scream from it they will not hear. What you put into it to nourish your body they will snatch away and give you leavins instead.

and their Portuguese rewriting:

o que sai de sua eles não vão ouvir. O que vocês gritam com ela eles não ouvem. O que vocês põem nela para nutrir seu corpo eles vão arrancar de vocês e dar no lugar os restos deles.

In addition, Siqueira maintains the active sentence as active, while Massaro does not, and transforms "they will snatch away and give you leavins instead" into the equivalent versions of "eles vão arrancar de vocês e dar no lugar os restos deles" (Excerpt 4). In Excerpt 5, Massaro combines fluency and signifyin(g) by reducing the sentence "this is flesh I'm talking about here" to "estou falando de carne". Siqueira makes a different decision and does not reduce the sentence, but keeps it the way Morrison writes it: "é de carne que estou falando aqui". In addition, Massaro changes the imperative clause "so love your neck" into "vocês é que devem amá-lo", while it is kept by Siqueira as the imperative proposed by Morrison in "então amem seu pescoço" (Excerpt 6). Finally, Massaro transforms the adjective "beating" into the phrase "que bate", and alters the direct imperative sentence "love your heart" into the modal sentence "devemos amar nosso coração". Due to Siqueira's translational strategy, the adjective "beating" keeps its equivalence with the adjective "batente" and the clause "love your heart" remains imperative: "amem seu coração" (Excerpt 8).

**Semantic** interventions also form part of Massaro's fluent *signifyin(g)*, while Siqueira seeks to signify upon Morrison's source text through resistant translation. Chesterman explains that "semantic strategies manipulate meaning" (101). Semantic decisions help us understand how fluency and resistance work on the level of the meaning of words and, thus, contribute to the realization of *signfyin(g)*. Initially, through synonymy (defined by Chesterman as near-synonymy in order to avoid repetition), Massaro activates fluency and *signifyin(g)*, by replacing the phrase "on bare feet" with the adjective "*descalça*", "it" with "*essa carne*", and "hard" with "*muito*". Additionally, Massaro repeatedly uses "*nosso(s)/nossa(s)*" to render "your". In this regard, Siqueira's semantic interventions take an opposing path in relation to the decisions made by Massaro. He makes the target terms signify upon their source equivalents, opting for "*descalça*", "*isso*", "*forte*", and "*a sua*", respectively (Excerpt 1). Massaro treats the phrase "and O my people" as synonymous with "*E, meu povo*", and the demonstrative "*essas*" as synonymous with "hands", while Siqueira, loyal to resisting *signifyin(g)*, opts for "*E, ah, meu povo*", and, as the source text does not repeat the word "hands", Siqueira comes close to Massaro, with a varied version, "essas que" (Excerpt 2). Other occurrences of synonymy appear in Massaro's use of "uns aos outros" and "gostar" as synonymous with "others" and "love", respectively; "gostar" also becomes synonymous with "in love with". To which Siqueira offers "outros", "amar" and "amar", respectively (Excerpt 3). In addition, in this last semantic signifyin(g), Massaro copes with the noun "the beat" as "a pulsação", and inflates the noun phrase "free air" with an ideological and political connotation of "ar da liberdade". Here, Siqueira accepts the noun "o bater" and the noun phrase "ar livre" (Excerpt 8).

Besides **syntactic** and **semantic** signifyin(g) interferences over Morrison's *Beloved* in order to make it the fluent or the resistant text of *Amada*, Massaro and Siqueira also cope with **pragmatic** interventions in order to characterize how they signify upon the source language. Chesterman writes that

pragmatic strategies tend to involve bigger changes from the ST, and typically incorporate syntactic and/or semantic changes as well. If syntactic strategies manipulate form, and semantic strategies manipulate meaning, pragmatic strategies can be said to manipulate the message itself. These strategies are often the result of a translator's global decisions concerning the appropriate way to translate the text as a whole. (107)

With regard to how pragmatic interventions and *signifyin(g)* converge, Massaro does not provide translational equivalences of some textual features present in the ST. For instance, while she avoids redundancy by omitting the sentence "love them", Siqueira maintains the redundant sentence "*amem*" (Excerpt 2). Also, Massaro discards another redundant occurrence in the adverbial phrase "*out there*", and so denies a Portuguese version to the clause "pat them together", but Siqueira keeps the adverb as "*lá*" and the sentence as "*toquem uma na outra*" (Excerpt 3). Moreover, Massaro does not consider the sentence "you got to love it" for translation, while Siqueira decides to give it the Portuguese version of "*vocês têm de amar*" (Excerpt 4). Finally, the sentence "and all your inside parts that they'd just as soon slop for hogs, you got to love them" does not receive any translation from Massaro, but Siqueira provides it with the Portuguese sentence "*e todas as suas partes de dentro que eles são capazes de jogar para os porcos, vocês têm de amar*" (Excerpt 7).

#### Conclusion

The terms displacement, mobility, fluency and resistance have been brought together in this article, along with *signifyin(g)*, Black nationalism and negritude, in order to provide the construction of a singular view of translation within African American literary tradition. These interrelated concepts have helped the reader grasp translation as a continuum that brought particular source excerpts extracted from *Beloved* into an encounter with their target equivalents, present in the two *Amadas*, and, then, return to their previous original source again. This back-and-forth dislocation of linguistic and cultural pieces embodied the traces of Gates's concept of *signifyin(g)*, which enhanced

textual conversation of the source text with the two target texts through syntactic, semantic and pragmatic fluency and resistance.

Let me insist on the idea of *signifyin(g)* once again, by enlarging the scope of textual conversation beyond the contours of Black literature and criticism. Viewed from the perspective of Gates's *signifyin(g)*, literary translation allows us to place this analysis in the environment of what Deleuze and Guattari name "Minor Literature", characterized by four major aspects: linguistic displacement, political connotation, collective configuration and painful vivifications. The French critics add that "we might as well say that minor no longer designates specific literatures but revolutionary conditions for every literature within the heart of what is called great (or established) literature" (18).

I would like to close this discussion by returning to *signifyin(g)* in terms of the way Gurleen Grewal associates Morrison's novels in general, and *Beloved* in particular, with the four elements pertaining to "Minor Literature". This critic adds

By endowing pain – itself mute and inchoate and all too personal – with a narrative that is as intelligible as it is social, Morrison makes room for recovery that is a once cognitive and emotional, therapeutic and political. Loss is both historicized and mourned so that it acquires a collective force, and a political understanding [...]. In the novels, the place of the individual is de-isolated, the boundaries of the self shown to be permeated by the collective struggle of historical agents who live the long sentence of history by succumbing to (repeating), contesting, and remaking it. (14)

The strength of "remaking" the source text within the linguistic body of the target text is what characterizes translation. This is an aspect that invites the reader to relate Deleuze and Guattari's notion of minor literature to Venuti's concept of *minoritizing translation*, to remake both of them. *Minoritizing translation* signifies upon *Minor Literature* in the way Venuti recaptures the French thinkers' ideas and terminology, claiming that "good translation is minoritizing: it releases the remainder by cultivating a heterogeneous discourse, opening up the standard dialect and literary canons to what is foreign to themselves, to the substandard and the marginal" (11). Between fluency and resistance, Landers's preference for the first is confronted by Venuti's choice of the second, understood as foreignization. As for me, I believe that three distinct theories of translation can inhabit the same text; the fluent, the resistant, and the hybrid flow running between the fluent and the resistant, simultaneously. But this remains to be discussed elsewhere.

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